

REMARKS

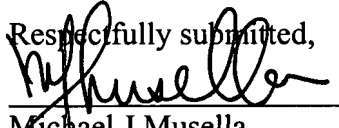
Claims 1-2 and 4-7 are pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 5 being the independent claims. Claim 3 is cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1 and 4-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitama (U.S. Patent No.: 6,175,728 A1) in view of Ratto (US Patent No. 6,993,091). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitama in view of Ratto and further view of Kataoka et al. (JP 10247953).

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 1 and 5 are amended to recite the limitations of cancelled Claim 3, which the Examiner indicated would be allowed if written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 2, 4 and 6-7 depend from and contain all the elements of amended Claims 1 and 5. Claims 2, 4 and 6-7 are distinguishable from Khlat and Ratto in the same manner as Claims 1 and 5.

The application as now presented, containing Claims 1-2 and 4-7 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicant's attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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